
THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.

1886
(87)

In view of the fact that the electors of the Province will shortly be called upon to select representatives in the Quebec Legislature for the ensuing five years, the following information derived from official sources and all of which can be readily verified by reference to the Blue Books, has been compiled for the guidance of voters and to assist them in determining how their votes should be cast.

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THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.

In connection with Provincial concerns it is, perhaps, even more than in Federal matters, of the highest and last importance that the financial aspect of affairs should be correctly understood. Especially is this the case in the Province of Quebec, where the opponents of the Government have not scrupled to create the impression—among those who have probably neither the time nor the inclination to investigate for themselves—that the province is and has for long been upon the brink of ruin and consequent utter demoralization. A few figures—and those of an official character—put as plainly and simply as possible, will, doubtless, be sufficient to dispel this idea from the minds of honest and straightforward people, who are not blinded by prejudice, or who have not been so completely lost in the spirit of partizanship as to be unable to appreciate a plain and unvarnished statement of facts. It may be premised that, though the situation has been complicated by the disloyal deliverances of those with whom, unfortunately, party advancement is the first consideration, it is by no means alarming. Indeed it is particularly

HOPEFUL AND ENCOURAGING.

The policy of the different Conservative administrations that, since Confederation, have mainly directed the provincial destinies, has been one of progress and development, to secure which they have not hesitated to impose sacrifices upon the people which have been cheerfully borne under the conviction that the present generation owed a duty to posterity, the consequences

of neglecting which could not fail to be most regrettable. On the other hand, the Opposition appear, according to their deliverances, to have been influenced by those narrow considerations contained in that frequently invoked, but unpatriotic inquiry of what has posterity done for me? Had such influences prevailed, where would have been the material advancement that has already been made, and of whose daily march the world at large is the admiring witness? The provincial railway policy has been mentioned frequently as a grave ground of offending. But wherein lies the offence? Is it because an extensive system of railway facilities has been afforded that has given to almost every portion of the province a more or less direct means of communication with the great centres of trade and commerce, and is yet being augmented in a manner that is destined to render it much more efficient and effective? It has been their railways that have constituted the importance of the majority of modern nations, that have promoted their commerce and secured and ensured their wealth and prosperity. Great Britain and the United States are among the most notable examples that could be named. Would their people, or even the opponents of the present provincial Government, be content to go back to the times as they existed before the advent of the steam engine and the telegraph? Nevertheless, the logical conclusion to be arrived at from the attitude of the men who lead the Liberal party of this Province is that they belong to this class of *Reactionnaires*.

Since the inauguration of

THE PROVINCIAL RAILWAY POLICY,

1384 miles of railway have been constructed by the Province, or have received aid to the extent of \$16,658,210.38 from the Provincial Treasury. This, with special grants for agricultural purposes, colonisation, public instruction, charitable institutions, and erection of public buildings in Quebec, brought up the public indebtedness, 30th June, 1885, to \$20,590,075.72, made up as follows:—

LIABILITIES.

Consolidated debt.....	\$18,283,853 34
Temporary loans and deposits	637,739 45
Balance due on account of North Shore Railroad	86,697 49

To these must be added—

Balance of subsidies granted to railways, but not yet due.	1,255,013 65
“ “ estimated cost of Parliamentary buildings....	135,000 00
“ “ “ “ Quebec Court-house	154,700 00
Teachers' Pension Fund.....	87,071 79
Total.....	<u>\$20,590,075 72</u>

But on the other side the account the Province has

ASSETS.

Selling price of North Shore Railroad.....	\$7,600,000 00
Capitalised subsidies for the North Shore Railroad, 47 Vic., cap. 8	2,394,000 00
Debt of old Province of Canada, 47 Vic., cap. 4	2,549,213 61
Amount due by the Province of Ontario and the City of Montreal for the Hull bridge and extension of the North Shore Railroad to the Barracks	273,196 96
Special deposits.....	1,000,000 00
Money in bank	265,481 56
Cost of the Jacques Cartier Normal School, Montreal, to be repaid by the sale of property at Montreal	138,348 02
Debentures to be issued on account of Quebec Court-house	50,000 00
Arrears of interest due by Dominion of Canada.....	53,618 67
Total.....	<u>\$14,323,858 82</u>

Deducting Assets, 30th June, 1885	\$14,323,858 82
from Liabilities, “ “	20,590,075 72

We have total debt, 30th June, 1885.....	<u>\$6,266,216 90</u>
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THUS THE SOLE OBLIGATION THAT THE PROVINCE HAS CONTRACTED, IN ORDER TO SUBSIDIZE AND PROMOTE A VAST SYSTEM OF RAILWAYS WHICH, WITHOUT THIS AID, WOULD NEVER HAVE

BEEN UNDERTAKEN, AND IN ADDITION TO ERECT THE NECESSARY PUBLIC BUILDINGS AT THE CAPITAL, HAS BEEN **\$6,266,216 90.**

Those who will be disposed to dispute the wisdom of this policy will, it is certain, be but few in number, while those who do so cannot expect to be regarded as other than non-progressive, and as considering the question from a standpoint other than that of the public interest. The advantages that our Provincial railway system has secured to us are already recognized to have been immense, and the voice of the people upon the question pure and simple could not fail to be in favour of it.

It is proper just here to ascertain in what position the province stands in so far as its provisions to meet the

ANNUAL INTEREST CHARGES

upon this public debt of \$20,590,075.72. The annual interest payable to the Government on the purchase price of the Provincial Railways amounts to \$374,532.82. In 1884 the Federal Parliament granted two special subsidies to the Quebec Provincial Railways, the interest upon which was alone to be paid. This interest amounts to \$187,310.68, to which must be added \$80,078.60 interest upon different investments and deposits, in all, \$641,922.10. Thus more than two-thirds of the annual interest charge (\$923,042.98 in 1884-5) which the province has to meet, is provided for, leaving a balance of \$281,120.88 otherwise to be met. This, in fact, constitutes all that has annually to be paid in return for the railway and other improvements that the wisdom of the Conservative Government has given the province.

The railway situation being thus clearly explained, it is proper to consider how the province stands in the light of ordinary

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE,

remarking that, as has been shown, a sum of \$281,120.88 of interest—an extraordinary expenditure—has to be provided for out of the ordinary revenue. In 1884-85 the annual statement was as follows:—

Ordinary Receipts.....	\$2,962,806 00
Ordinary Expenditure.....	2,937,856 00

Showing a surplus of..... \$ 24,950 00

* But in 1884-5, \$49,716.64 were paid on account of the loan contracted in France, the public debt being consequently diminished by that amount. It is true that the actual outlay of the Province for the year reached \$3,155,652.79; but this sum included the expenditures made on account of the new Parliament Buildings and the Quebec Court-house, which were clearly not chargeable to revenue, and were therefore not contained in the figures of ordinary expenditure above-mentioned. In 1867-68, the first year after Confederation,

THE EXPENSES OF THE PROVINCE

amounted to \$1,183,238; but then there was no interest to pay, the Province not having inaugurated those enterprises and improvements which have proved to be so beneficial. A comparison of the two years' expenditures shows

1884-5	\$2,937,856
1867-8	1,183,238

Difference..... \$1,754,618

From this augmentation in 1884-85, if we deduct \$980,118, the amount annually payable on interest account and sinking fund, we have as the excess of the ordinary expenditure in 1884-9 over that of 1867-8, a sum of \$774,508.

On the other hand, in 1884-5 grants to charitable institutions were \$172,805.33 greater than in 1867-8; administration of justice shows an advance of \$81,944.88; colonisation, an excess of \$70,329; public instruction, of \$72,279.73; agriculture, of \$22,794.62; while the other services have been proportionately augmented and increased in accordance with the public requirements, and as justified by the larger amount of ordinary revenue, which in 1867-8 was only \$1,386,837.29 as against \$2,962,806.99 in 1884.

The Federal Government omitted to pay part of the interest on the Railway Grant for the year ending 30th June, 1885, amounting to \$53,618.67, which, if it had been paid, would have

increased the surplus on the year's transactions by that amount. The sum was paid over in the succeeding fiscal year, and it gives an increase of ordinary revenue of \$1,635,819.70, while, as has before been shown, the augmentation of ordinary expenses last year only amounted to \$774,508; \$980,110 being chargeable as interest upon the public debt, contracted for the construction of railways and other public improvements. It has already been shown that \$641,922.10 of the annual interest on the debt—\$980,110.20—were covered by the interest paid to Government by the purchasers of the North Shore Railway, by the interest paid by the Federal Government by way of annual railway subsidy and by the interest received by the Province for special deposits. We thus discover that although, in addition to its increased ordinary expenses, the Province has to make provision out of ordinary revenue for \$338,188.10 interest on loans and sinking fund, the sole difference between ordinary income and ordinary expenditure, plus this \$338,188.10 for interest, is \$118,499.

AND WHO WILL SAY THAT THE BENEFITS DERIVED FROM THIS POLICY HAVE NOT BEEN WORTH ANNUALLY A FAR GREATER AMOUNT THAN THIS PALTRY SUM, WHICH, UNDER THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT, WILL GRADUALLY BE EXTINGUISHED IN THE SAME WAY AS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO ACCOUNTS HAS BEEN GRADUALLY REDUCED? COMPARE THIS EXHIBIT WITH THAT MADE BY THE JOLY GOVERNMENT ON 30TH JUNE, 1879, WHEN THERE WAS, ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF MR. DROLET, THE PROVINCIAL AUDITOR, A DEFICIT OF \$672,811.64. MOREOVER, DURING THE TWENTY MONTHS OF ADMINISTRATION OF MR. JOLY AND HIS FRIENDS, WHO PLEDGED THEMSELVES TO REFORM AND ECONOMISE, OVER A MILLION DOLLARS OF DEFICITS BETWEEN ORDINARY REVENUE AND ORDINARY EXPENDITURE WERE ADDED TO THE PUBLIC DEBT.

It is by its acts—its fulfilment of its promises and pledges—that the Ross Government expects to be judged; and it is, therefore, only an act of justice towards it that the inquiry be made—“WHAT WERE THE ENGAGEMENTS OF THE ROSS ADMINISTRATION, AND WHAT HAS IT SUCCEEDED IN ACCOMPLISHING?”

In general terms, the latter inquiry has been answered in the foregoing statements; but it may be added that, while the

strictest economy has been exercised, there has been no prejudicing of the public service, which has been conducted quite as efficiently as, if not more efficiently than, ever before. Economy, however well it may be understood and appreciated, is not unfrequently interpreted and carried out in a sense the reverse of its signification; for it is no economy to practice a system bordering on beggarliness, under whose operation, indeed, the public interests are made to suffer. That can only be termed true economy which serves the Province in the best possible manner, and with the least possible amount of expenditure. In submitting, during the session of 1883-4, its estimates for the fiscal year 1884-5.

THE ROSS GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED ITS EXPECTATION TO BE ABLE
TO REDUCE EXPENSES BY SOMETHING LIKE \$200,000.

What it succeeded in accomplishing will be apparent from the following table—

Ordinary expenses of the public service in 1883-4..	\$3,121,196 03
" " " " 1884-5..	2,937,856 95
Reduction.....	\$183,339 08

There can, therefore, be no question either as to the sincerity of the administration or of its determination and ability to carry out all its promises and undertakings: IT HAS ALREADY ACCOMPLISHED WHAT IT UNDERTOOK TO DO.

THE \$3,500,000 LOAN.

Upon the subject of the \$3,500,000 loan, authorised to the extent of \$3,000,000 by the Legislature in 1882, the Liberals have endeavoured wilfully and seriously to misrepresent the Conservative Party. Their contention has been that the loan was authorised, although the sale of the Provincial roads had been effected, in order to put an end to the necessity of making further loans, whereas the claim of the Government was that if the road were sold, the Province would not be compelled to contract a loan to pay for its construction and other purposes.

According to the Bill authorising the \$3,000,000 loan, it was effected in order to pay—

- 1st. The floating debt of the Province.
- 2nd. The claims resulting from the construction of the North Shore Railway.
- 3rd. The subsidies to other railways.
- 4th. The works upon the Departmental Buildings and Houses of Parliament.

Now, the Legislature, having authorised these expenditures, several years previously, could hardly have refused the Government the means of procuring the money necessary to meet the obligations that it had compelled it to contract. That money was employed in a strictly legal manner for the purposes contemplated. The amount obtained by the loan was \$3,479,533.33, and was utilised as follows—

Quebec Central Railway deposit.....	\$ 354,652 09
Repayment of temporary loans obtained 30th June, 1882, under chap. 18, 45 Vic.	600,000 00
North Shore Railway	904,786 33
Subsidies to railways under cap. 18, 45 Vic.....	509,705 80
On account Departmental Buildings and new Parliament House	233,164 23
Total amount paid.....	<u>\$2,602,308 45</u>

Balance of loan of 1882-3 \$ 877,224 88
This balance was deposited in bank on the 30th June, 1885, at 5 per cent., pending its employment conformably to the law.

IT IS THUS EVIDENT THAT THE PRODUCT OF THE LOAN WAS EMPLOYED IN A STRICTLY LEGAL MANNER, AND APPLIED STRICTLY TO THE OBJECTS CONTEMPLATED BY THE LAW OF 1882.

TWO GOVERNMENTS CONTRASTED.

By way of illustration of the respective methods and practices of the Liberals and Conservatives when in office, a comparison might just here be very properly drawn between the Ross and Joly Governments. The responsibility of the latter for the finan-

cial administration of 1878-79 cannot be questioned, while Mr. Ross and his friends are none the less entitled to be called in question for the administration of 1884-85. Mr. Joly's economy was of such a character as induced him to limit the grant to agricultural purposes to \$64,007 in 1878-79, while Mr. Ross granted \$71,473, or \$7,386 more. The farmers of the Province will readily appreciate which of the two was the best disposed to their particular interest, upon which so much of, in fact almost all, the practical development of the Province depends. In 1878-79, the Liberals only expended \$38,000 for colonization, while the Conservatives expended \$80,000 for the purpose in 1884-85, and \$175,000 for 1885-86, with \$155,000 promised for 1886-87, or \$410,000 in three years. In 1878-79, the Joly Government only contributed \$271,229 for charitable institutions, including lunatic asylums, while the Ross Administration subsidized them to the extent of \$298,061, or an increase of \$26,832. UNQUESTIONABLY, THE ROSS GOVERNMENT HAS A GREATER CLAIM UPON THE ELECTORS UNDER THESE SPECIAL ITEMS THAN THE LIBERAL PARTY CAN POSSIBLY HAVE, WHO SHOWED, WHEN THEY WERE IN OFFICE, THAT THEY DID NOT BELIEVE THEM TO BE WORTHY OF MUCH SPECIAL CONSIDERATION, ALTHOUGH THEY WERE OBJECTS WITH ATTENTION TO WHICH THE PROVINCE WAS CONSTITUTIONALLY CHARGED.

EXPENDITURE.

The following is a comparison of the expenditure on account of the principal branches of the public service:—

	1879.	1885.
Justice.....	\$399,790	\$356,646
Police.....	14,450	14,090
Reformatories.....	57,000	55,000
Public Instruction.....	371,722	380,358
Immigration.....	14,800	9,868
Crown Lands.....	152,753	135,508
Totals.....	\$1,010,515	\$981,470

In these six principal items of expenditure it will be observed that the Ross Government has effected an economy of close upon

ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS

annually, as compared with the amount the Liberal Government spent in 1879, under conditions that ought to have been much more favorable for the application of a policy of retrenchment. Another test of the economy of the present Administration is afforded by the Civil List, in other words, the number of officials employed in the several departments of Government. The following is a list of the number of officials in the service in the year 1879-80, during nearly one-half of which the Liberal party was in office, and in the last fiscal year for which we have the accounts. It may be added that since the publication of the Public Accounts for the latter period, a further reduction in the staff has been effected:—

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES.

	1880.	1885.
Legislative Council.....	14	10
Legislative Assembly.....	38	31
Law Clerks.....	4	4
Lieut.-Governor's Office.....	4	3
Executive Council.....	5	3
Provincial Secretary.....	11	8
Provincial Registrar.....	4	3
Crown Law Department.....	4	4
Treasury Department.....	15	19
Crown Lands Department.....	28	35
Agriculture and Public Works.....	14	17
Public Instruction.....	12	12
	153	149

That is as conclusive an answer as can be had to the accusation that the conduct of the Government in recent times has not been marked by a close regard to economy, proving, as the record does, that in spite of the enlargement of the business of the province, the growth of population, and an increase of work upon the Administration, it has been found possible to efficiently conduct public affairs with a numerically smaller staff of officials than was deemed necessary in 1880.

THE LIBERAL RECORD.

The Liberal party appeals to the Electorate for support in the pending contest, largely on the pretension that, if returned to power, the finances of the province will be more prudently and more economically managed. There is no better test of the sincerity and validity of this claim than that drawn from experience of these people in office, an experience which Mr. Mercier and his friends would willingly have the public forget. The claims advanced by the Opposition at this time were, with equal emphasis, put forth in the general election of 1878, and when the party, having succeeded in securing office, faced the Legislature, the Liberal Treasurer, the late Hon. Mr. Bachand, undertook to carry on the Government, proceed with contemplated public works, and meet the interest and charges upon the public debt, with a sum of \$2,314,041. In his budget speech he was very emphatic upon this point, saying:—"The present Government engages to fulfil all the obligations of the Province, legitimately contracted, without injury to the public service, by the adoption of a policy of economy and retrenchment well applied, and without recourse to direct taxation." He proceeded to show in what manner and to what extent, and to what branches of the public service this policy was to be applied, and he concluded his statement by the declaration that he anticipated that the financial year closing the 30th of June, 1879, would show all the obligations of the Province honestly met, the public enterprises faithfully carried out, and a surplus in the Treasury of \$17,495. He also "pledged his word that the expenditure of the various branches of the public service would not exceed the amount estimated by him." He unhappily was not spared to see the results of the year's administration; but when the figures came down, it turned out that the actual expenditure for the same service reached the sum of \$2,685,340, a larger sum than has ever been spent in one year on ordinary expenditure in the Province of Quebec, and no less than \$371,299 in excess of the revenue. Then looking at the statements submitted by Mr. Langelier, what do we find? In order to conceal the utter failure to make ends meet, we have a sum—

an exceptional item which, in the course of the debate which followed the budget speech, the Treasurer himself admitted could not be claimed as ordinary revenue—of half a million, obtained from the Dominion Government, on account of a claim arising out of the unsettled assets and liabilities of the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec respectively, classed as an ordinary receipt. We had the balance on hand at the commencement of the year, amounting to \$227,622, treated in the same way. And we have another item of \$79,515 claimed as a receipt, because it was held that in 1872 it had been improperly paid out of the Consolidated Fund, to the Richelieu, Drummond & Arthabaska Railway, and, as a mere piece of book-keeping, that fund was not credited with it, the sum being charged against the Consolidated Railway Fund. And, then on the other side, we had the interest and sinking fund of the public debt charged to capital account. Correcting these gross errors—this discreditable system of cooking public accounts—we have the following as a result of the first year's administration of Mr. Joly and his colleagues:—

RECEIPTS.....	\$2,832,078
Less: Dominion Government.....	\$500,000
Balance on hand at commencement of year	227,622
Book-keeping item.....	79,515
	807,137
Ordinary receipts.....	\$2,024,941
PAYMENTS.....	1,958,243
Add: Interest Public Debt.....	727,097
	\$2,685,340
Deficit.....	\$660,491

That was the result of the first year's operation of Liberal Government which proposed to make ends meet without resort to taxation, whose only *raison d'être*, in fact, was that they would accomplish this work, and as pledges were violated, faith broken, and a reign of corruption and extravagance inaugurated with the access to power of the Liberals in 1878, so would it be to-day if the electors so far forget their interests as to entrust the conduct of Provincial affairs to the present Opposition, whose professions

of economy and inclination to extravagance are all the more apparent because of Mr. Mercier's presence in the leadership.

COMPARISON WITH ONTARIO.

The reproach has sometimes been cast upon Quebec by those unacquainted with the real condition of affairs that while Ontario has prospered financially and managed to conduct public affairs without resort to new taxation, and without meeting a deficit in the revenue, our own Province has incurred a considerable debt and for ten years its revenue has fallen short of the outgo. Let us examine how the case stands. If we take the ordinary annual expenditure as a test, we have this result:—

ONTARIO EXPENDITURE.

	1871.	1885.
Legislation.....	\$94,177	\$125,762
Civil Government.....	114,613	184,254
Justice.....	182,621	354,923
Education.....	351,306	533,564
Public Institutions.....	213,039	613,570
Immigration.....	29,712	19,088
Agriculture.....	74,927	159,576
Miscellaneous.....	34,559	100,320
	<u>\$1,094,954</u>	<u>\$2,091,057</u>

QUEBEC EXPENDITURE.

	1873.	1883.
Legislation.....	\$163,591	\$185,217
Civil Government.....	135,106	187,874
Justice.....	311,884	356,646
Education.....	308,447	347,885
Public Institutions.....	193,299	298,061
Immigration.....	40,681	9,868
Agriculture.....	53,248	71,473
Miscellaneous.....	56,141	39,769
	<u>\$1,262,397</u>	<u>\$1,496,793</u>

It will thus be seen that while Ontario has increased its ordinary expenditure by

ONE MILLION DOLLARS

or about one hundred per cent., Quebec has enlarged its expenditure by only \$235,000 or little more than twenty per cent. Moreover, the Mowat Administration has, during its term of office, dissipated three millions of the surplus bequeathed to it by the Sandfield-Macdonald Government, and in the year, 1885, the revenue of the Province was \$460,159 short of the expenditure. The Public Accounts of that period showed a revenue of \$3,005,920 and an expenditure of \$3,046,112, leaving an apparent deficiency of \$40,192, but in the income was included \$271,399 the proceeds of the sale of annuities, and \$148,568 derived from the sale of timber limits, neither of which can properly be classed as ordinary revenue. Quebec has certainly no reason to shrink from a contrast with her sister Province in the matter of financial management and administration.

THE ROSS GOVERNMENT AND ITS PLEDGES.

The Ross Administration, on its advent to power, announced as part of its programme its intention to press to a satisfactory conclusion the negotiations that had been commenced looking to an early

SETTLEMENT OF THE CLAIMS OF THE PROVINCE AGAINST THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT—

and it succeeded. Nothing on its part was neglected, and as early as the session of the Dominion Parliament in 1884 the sum of \$2,549,213 was voted as the capitalised amount by the interest upon which the ordinary subsidy of the Province should be augmented, and a further sum of \$2,394,000 was similarly appropriated as the basis of a subsidy to be annually granted on account of the construction by the Province of the North Shore Railway system, which had been declared to be in a special manner a

Dominion work, as part of the Canadian Pacific through line. This, at five per cent., gave to the Province an additional annual grant of \$187,310.69, not only guaranteed, but actually provided for by the Dominion. Then the Ross Government, when when it assumed office, gave pledges that it would do its utmost to promote the material interests of the Province. What has it attempted or accomplished? With the vast tracts of unoccupied and undeveloped territory in the Province, much of it of the highest value for agriculture, mining, lumbering and, indeed, fishing, it is manifest that a great deal was to be done by colonisation, including the construction of roads to afford access to and from remote sections. Last year the Government caused \$175,000 to be voted for this purpose, being \$100,000 more than the previous grant, and a handsome provision for the object, particularly when contrasted with Mr. Joly's reduction of the grant to the miserable pittance of \$38,000. Last session the Government secured a grant for this purpose of \$155,000, thus devoting within two years \$330,000 to this most important and beneficial purpose. But besides all this, the Administration contemplates the construction of

COLONIZATION RAILWAYS.

and proposed last session to devote to this object the land grant made in 1882 to several railway enterprises which have not yet been carried into operation. Under the law of 1882, alternate blocks of land were granted to the railway companies, while the law of last session authorised the conversion of the land into money, at a value not exceeding 35 cents cash per acre, and not more than 35 cents per acre when the lands are sold for colonization purposes under the regulations of the Crown Lands Department. By the legislation of last session, the Government has not increased the subsidies formerly granted, as stated by Hon. Mr. Mercier to be the case. Indeed, it has rather diminished them, for instead of being obliged to pay about half a million dollars as the cost of locating grants, it has only to pay at the outside a sum of 35 cents per acre, and that to the companies alone which

conform to the law and the conditions prescribed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council; but few of which will be able to do so within a comparatively short time. By the building of these railways, the lands, instead of being sold at 20, 30 and 40 cents per acre, may be sold at \$1; and in many cases as high as \$4 or \$5. For the present, the only railway that can claim much of its subsidy is the Lake St. John road, which has 82 miles already inspected, and has the right to 5,000 acres per mile on 170 miles. This, at 35 cents per acre, would make only \$143,500. In this connection, it may be emphatically declared that the Government has not introduced railway legislation on the eve of the elections in order to favour its friends; the fact being that it was unable, for lack of funds, to accede to the demands of a number of enterprises that it would have otherwise liked to encourage. In a word, the Government, instead of increasing subsidies, as its opponents have contended, has merely sought to carry out existing engagements, meeting the situation as it presented itself, and in a manner that would not increase the obligations of the Province. The contention that there has been an understanding between the Dominion and Provincial Governments as to which roads should be subsidised by the former, cannot be regarded as other than childish, since the aid of the latter is only extended to enterprises which the Province regards as necessary or useful. Indeed, pretensions like these show how far their partizanship will lead some politicians to blindly oppose what is of the highest importance to their Province. The wisdom of the Government in endeavouring in this way to promote the most beneficent enterprises, and with the smallest burden upon the Province, will, it would appear, be sufficiently manifest to need no further demonstration. In regard to

IMMIGRATION,

the Opposition has striven to bring on a vote to censure the Government for its immigration policy. But they seem to have forgotten that when in power they expended more money for

this purpose than has been done by the Ross Government. In 1878-79, the Joly Government appropriated \$13,685.25, while that of Hon. Mr. Ross only expended \$9,868.24, or \$3,817 less; the amount asked for 1886-87 being only \$8,000, or \$5,685.25 less than Mr. Joly and his friends devoted to the purpose. What can have induced the Opposition Party to have changed their views so radically, and that without definitely announcing what they would be prepared to do? A LITTLE CONSISTENCY, TRUTHFULNESS AND JUSTICE WOULD POSSIBLY BE IN ORDER HERE.

A PROVINCIAL STUD.

During a visit to France, last year, the Hon. Prime Minister, Mr. Ross, was convinced that by the introduction of good stock animals, such as he saw there, our farmers would make more money than they at present did by the breeding of colts. He therefore concluded that it was the duty of the Government to encourage the purchase of choice stud animals, inasmuch as the farmer would be able to sell for \$60 and \$100 the colts which he now sold for \$20 and \$40, and for the horses which he reared might obtain \$400 and \$500, instead of \$100 and \$200 as now. The Government consequently resolved to encourage the establishment of a stud, whence first-class stallions should be distributed all over the Province, and the result of which would be that before ten years the Province would become one of the most noted places in America for horse breeding. But to this idea the Liberal members of the House were opposed, and refused to vote the necessary appropriation. This was

VOTING AGAINST THE FARMING CLASSES,

AN ATTITUDE WHICH WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN. THE FARMERS WILL REMEMBER THAT THEY HAVE THE CONSERVATIVES TO THANK FOR THEIR WILLINGNESS TO AID THEM, BUT THEY CANNOT POSSIBLY HAVE ANY GRATITUDE FOR THE LIBERALS WHO ACTED IN THIS MATTER AS OBSTRUCTORS OF A MOST PRAISEWORTHY OBJECT.

THE SALE OF THE NORTH SHORE RAILWAY.

Among the topics upon which the Opposition have continued to harp—though the notes of some of them have been discordant—has been the sale of the North Shore Railway for \$7,600,000, plus \$400,000 which the Canadian Pacific Company had undertaken to pay for improvements upon the road between Montreal and Ottawa. The amount obtained has in some quarters been severely criticised as being insufficient, and it has been openly charged that everything in connection with that sale was not satisfactory.

THE REASONS FOR THE SALE

may be given as follow—

1st. The difficulty that exists in the way of the administration of such an enterprise by Government. This will be at once apparent.

2nd. The sale of the railway would assure to the Provincial Treasury a considerable and assured revenue, upon which it would have been impossible to depend had they continued to operate it. Moreover, circumstances did not require that the Government should run the road; persons in every way qualified and responsible having signified their willingness and desire to undertake the responsibility.

3rd. By selling the road, the Government were relieved of the necessary works of improvement and repairs, which the engineers had estimated at \$1,098,000.

4th. Not having these works to carry out, the Government were not obliged to negotiate a new loan for the purpose, and by so much, increase the Provincial indebtedness.

5th. If the road had not been sold, it is certain that a rival road would have been built as a link in the Canadian Pacific transcontinental line, which was already under construction by a powerful company.

It will not for a moment be denied that an enterprise of the kind could be far more readily managed by a company than by a

Government, whose functions, except under very peculiar circumstances, lie in an altogether different direction. Experience, both on this continent and in Europe, has amply demonstrated the correctness of this opinion. Mr. Joly, when Premier of the Province, caused a report of the Executive Committee of the Privy Council to be made in this sense. That report read as follows :—

“ That the Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa and Occidental Railway enterprise has reached such a stage that it ought to relieve the Province of the burden which its construction entailed, and that it ought to supply its share of the public revenue; and that it is of the highest importance, with a view to placing the finances of the Province upon a solid basis, that the exact amount coming each year from this source be known and determined in advance.

“ That, however zealous and faithful the officers of the Government may be, they have not the means, the facilities or the power to enable them to obtain successful results, such as are possessed by business men, who, being interested in the enterprise and commanding considerable capital, would have more experience in the different branches of trade and commerce, and would therefore be able to secure traffic from the remotest parts of the country.

“ Secondly. That no Government, however desirous it might be to do so, could operate a railway as economically as those persons who were directly interested in the result of the operations. Moreover, while not having the same facilities to create a traffic and increase the revenue, the Government would be expected to incur much more considerable expense.”

Later on, at a public meeting,

**MR. JOLY PRONOUNCED HIMSELF TO BE IN FAVOUR OF THE SALE
OF THE RAILWAY, ADDING THAT \$8,000,000 WOULD BE
A GOOD PRICE.**

It is thus evident that Mr. Joly believed that the Government could not successfully operate the railway, and that in the public

interest it was necessary to assure to the Provincial Treasury a stated fixed revenue.

Hon. Mr. Mercier, the present leader of the Opposition, was one of those who favoured the sale of the road. At the opening of the electoral campaign in Montreal, in 1881, he said—"The country is with me; it does not wish to have direct taxation. **"TO THE GOVERNMENT WHICH WILL SECURE A SATISFACTORY SALE OF THE RAILWAY, I SHALL GIVE MY SUPPORT.** The first thing we have to do," he added, "is to relieve our budget. We pay annually for interest and sinking fund \$900,000. So long as this kind of thing exists, it will be impossible for the Province to prosper in the manner that should be expected under a system of well-constituted government. • We can only attain this condition of things by the sale of the railway. IF IT CAN BE DISPOSED OF IN A MANNER THAT SHALL NOT PREJUDICE THE FUTURE INTERESTS OF THE PROVINCE, AND IF THERE CAN BE OBTAINED FOR IT THE AMOUNT WHICH THE GOVERNMENT IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN OFFERED—\$8,000,000—IT WOULD BE A GOOD TRANSACTION."

When informed that the deed of sale had been passed, Mr. Mercier said that **THE PREMIER HAD DONE WHAT THE COUNTRY SHOULD BE WELL SATISFIED WITH.** And he added, **"THERE OUGHT TO BE NO POLITICS ABOUT THIS QUESTION. THE WHOLE COUNTRY IS INTERESTED."**

M.R. MERCIER GAVE IN THE HOUSE A VOTE DIRECTLY IN FAVOUR OF THE SALE OF THE ROAD.

On 14th April, 1882, Mr. Gagnon, Liberal member for Kamouraska, introduced a motion of regret that the Government had not conducted the negotiations for the sale of the railway officially instead of confidentially, thereby depriving the House of information that it ought to have upon that important subject.

MR. MERCIER VOTED AGAINST THE MOTION OF HIS FRIEND, MR. GAGNON, and upon ten or a dozen occasions, when the sale of the railway came up in the House, **DID NOT VOTE,** as may be seen at pages 119, 120, 141, 142, 143, 144, 215, 216, 223 and 224 of the Journals of the House of Assembly. On the Gagnon motion, as has already been stated, he voted with the Government, and

then with the opposition voted to strike out the 3rd clause of a resolution referring to the sale of the St. Lin Railway, and that to St. Eustache.

And the Liberals who censure the Government for selling the railway, elect as their chief and continue to follow Mr. Mercier, who approved of that transaction!

"Consistency thou art a jewel!"

Mr. McSHANE, a Liberal member for Montreal West, voted in favour of the sale of the western portion of the railway, as may be seen at page 119 of the Journals of the House.

In view of these facts, it is, indeed, surprising that the Liberals should lay such stress upon the fact that a number of Conservatives, among them Hon. Mr. Ross, the Premier, and Mr. Robertson, the Treasurer, were opposed to the sale of the road. It was not to be wondered at that upon a pure and simple business matter there should not have been entire accord. Opinions will differ, but it is, indeed, remarkable that the rank and file of the Liberals, who appear to consider the sale of the railway as one of the Government's chief offences, should consent to follow Mr. Mercier, who endorsed and supported that action.

The fact must not for a moment be lost sight of that

THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT COME INTO POSSESSION OF THE ROADS
BY ITS OWN FREE-WILL.

The Companies which had assumed the work of their construction being unable to complete them, Hon. Mr. de Boucherville was, in 1875, compelled to undertake their completion on behalf of the Province, which already had considerable money—\$5,000,000 of subsidies—locked up in the enterprises. In 1879, the work of construction was completed, and in 1882 the Government of Mr. Chapleau deemed it advisable to sell the roads, THE CONTRACT OF SALE BEING RATIFIED BY THE LEGISLATURE.

THE NORTH SHORE RAILWAY INQUIRY.

During the Session of 1883, on March 6, Mr. Stephens, representative of Montreal West, moved, at a meeting of the Public

Accounts Committee, that a report be presented to the House recommending a complete audit by the Provincial Auditor of the account books, and all other documents and papers connected with the Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa and Occidental Railway. The Commissioner of Railways and the Provincial Treasurer at once promised that such an audit should be made, upon which it was moved by Mr. Picard, in effect, that this declaration was satisfactory, and that the Auditor's report should be submitted to the House at the beginning of the next Session. This motion was unanimously adopted.

On the 2nd and 15th April, 1884, motions upon the subject were proposed by the Opposition, and rejected by the friends of the Government, which, it was announced, was awaiting a report from the Auditor as to what he had accomplished. A few days later, on the 5th May, Hon. Mr. Taillon submitted to the House the Auditor's report, and on the 20th of the same month replied to Mr. Gagnon as follows:—

"The Government intends to cause an *enquête* to be made into "the details of the construction, the administration and the sale "of the railway, as well as into the final settlement of accounts, "and other matters which succeeded the sale and transfer. It "is the intention to have this inquiry made by a Royal Commission."

Immediately after the close of the Session, the Government set to work to constitute the Royal Commission, which was a work of some difficulty, Judge Meredith and Judge Casault successively declining to serve. Finally, Judge Routhier was named Commissioner, and signified his willingness to act. During the succeeding Session, that of 1885, the Opposition submitted a series of motions, giving instructions to the Commissioner to inquire into special matters in connection with the affair. Mr. Nantel then proposed a motion setting forth the instructions given, and concluding—"Whereas the limits assigned for this "inquiry are as extended as possible, it is not advisable that this "House indicate to the Commissioner the interpretation which "he should give to his commission, and instruct him into what "special matters he should inquire, but should leave to him the

"responsibility of deciding all such questions." This motion was adopted.

The Commissioner made the inquiry with all possible diligence, and will soon complete his work.

The Opposition has censured the Government for only appointing one Commissioner and a secretary. But THIS REPROACH IS UNJUST AND UTTERLY UNCALLED FOR, as it was desired to conduct the affair with all possible economy, and one Commissioner was sufficient, the secretary being an advocate of fifteen years' professional standing.

THE APPOINTMENT OF SEVERAL COMMISSIONERS WOULD HAVE CAUSED CONSIDERABLE AND USELESS EXPENSE, AND, IN DOING AS THEY DID, THE GOVERNMENT ACTED WITH WISDOM AND IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST.

THE AMOUNTS PAID AFTER THE SALE OF THE RAILWAY.

The Liberals have charged the Government with having paid money for the North Shore Railway after it had been sold. THIS IS ALTOGETHER UNJUST, AND THE MATTER IS EXCEEDINGLY EASY TO EXPLAIN.

The greater part of the money which the Government paid out on railway account after the road was sold, was for construction work completed before the sale. It is manifest that the Government was obliged to pay these accounts whether or not the road were sold.

Moreover, the Government paid another sum for work carried out after the contract of sale; but this has been in a great measure repaid, and the balance is a perfectly valid claim. THIS QUESTION IS VERY CLEAR AND SIMPLE.

Sessional return No. 78 gives complete explanations, and all necessary information will be found on pages 14, 15 and 16 of that document.

As this return shows, the sum of \$5,538.56 has already been paid into the Treasury. This document indisputably proves that of the \$1,211,496.16 paid after the sale, the sum of \$820,291.09

was for construction expenses incurred before the sale; \$288,738.42 was repaid to the Government, \$93,787.84 being yet collectable. ALL THESE PAYMENTS WERE PERFECTLY REGULAR, AND THERE IS NOT THE LEAST THING WITH WHICH TO REPROACH THE GOVERNMENT.

THE GALE DEFALCATION.

Among other want-of-confidence motions submitted last Session, is one by Mr. Girouard, of Drummond and Arthabaska, relating to the affair known as "the Gale defalcation."

This motion, being put to the vote, was rejected on a division by 42 to 14.

It is alleged that the sum of \$51,527.32 was abstracted from the public Treasury without any of the officials of the Crown Lands Department, or any members of the Government, being aware of it.

THIS ASSERTION IS FALSE, AND IN DIRECT CONTRADICTION OF THE PROOFS OBTAINED BY THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE WHICH HAD BEEN CHARGED WITH MAKING AN INQUIRY INTO THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

During the autumn of 1885, an error was discovered in the account books of the Department of Crown Lands, but the books had been so manipulated by the defaulting accountant, that it was impossible to discover where the defalcation occurred. As for the amount then supposed to be short, it was reduced in the first place by \$4,000 returned by Gale to the Department during December last; then by \$554.86 refunded by the broker who had conducted Gale's speculations; and, finally, by \$7,533.73, which had no right to be regarded as included in the \$51,000, thus reducing the real deficit in the books of the Crown Lands Department to \$39,438.73. These facts were known by all the members who voted in favour of Mr. Girouard's motion, for on the 8th June preceding, a report of the sub-committee was presented to the Public Accounts Committee, and in this report appeared the following paragraph:—

"That the amount of the defalcations of the late Mr. Gale,

"amounting to \$51,527.32, were reduced to a loss to the Province of \$39,438.72, on account of a sum of \$12,088.59 which was recovered by the Government. That this defalcation was the result of financial speculations made by Mr. Gale during a period of about three years."

This report of the sub-committee was endorsed by Messrs. Stephens, Cameron, Whyte and Boyer.

The pretension that this defalcation should have been mentioned in the speech from the Throne is too absurd to be refuted. The same may be said of the statement that its details should have been given in the report of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, and in that of the Provincial Auditor.

What the Government sought was to secure all that was possible of the moneys which had been taken, and, had it done as Mr. Girouard's motion suggested, it would have forfeited every chance it might have had of doing so.

In reply to the reflection that it was owing to the negligence of the Commissioner of Crown Lands and of the Government that the defaulter was able to escape from justice, it is sufficient to say that when Mr. Gale made his confession to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, on 30th December, 1885, he was in a very precarious state of health, so much so that on the 2nd January following, Dr. Rowan, one of the first physicians in Quebec, forwarded to the Commissioner a certificate setting forth that his patient was seriously ill, and that he entertained no hope of his recovery. This Dr. Rowan testified to upon oath before the Committee, saying that his sickness was incurable, and that it would have been an act of inhumanity to cause his arrest, the certain consequence of which would have been his death, by which no one would have been benefitted.

As for the departure of Mr. Gale for Philadelphia, it was owing to no fault of the officers of the Department, who never relaxed their vigilance. On the 11th of March last, the Commissioner learned of his flight, on the 22nd the family received news of his death, and on the 29th he was buried. It was rumoured that Gale was not dead; but the proof submitted to the Committee soon conclusively disposed of these malicious and groundless statements.

The deficit existing in the accounts of the Department is shown in the Public Accounts under the heading, "Amount to be accounted for by the Crown Lands Department." It could not be mentioned in any other way, seeing that at this time the investigation by the Commissioner of Crown Lands was going on, and that it was then impossible to state the exact sum to which the defalcation would amount. It really is \$39,438.73, and not \$51,537.32. The moment the House was seized of the question, the Government gave as full and explicit explanations as possible, and the report of the Public Accounts Committee, with respect to the matter, is most complete and conclusive.

As for the blame which is sought to be laid upon the Commissioner of Crown Lands and the entire Government with respect to this most unfortunate affair, the best refutation that can be offered is contained in the conclusions of the report submitted for adoption by the Liberal members of the Committee of Public Accounts, which conclusions form part of the general report submitted by the Committee, and which reads as follows:—

"That no blame is in any way to be attached to the Honorable the Commissioner of the Crown Lands, in connection with this transaction, who from the moment the defalcation was brought to his notice in the latter part of December, 1885, took every possible means in his power to protect the interests of the Province."

It was proved before the Committee of Public Accounts, by the incontestable testimony of several of the most prominent citizens of Quebec, that Gale had always maintained a blameless reputation, that he enjoyed the public confidence and esteem, and that the news of his defalcations took every one by surprise. And this testimony was corroborated by three former Commissioners of Crown Lands—Hon. Messrs. Malhiot, Garneau and Marchand. These gentlemen also confirmed the testimony of the Assistant Commissioner of Crown Lands, establishing that the system of book-keeping followed in the Crown Lands Department, during the three last years, was absolutely the same as had been in use during their administration of the affairs of the Department.

THE SHERBROOKE COURT-HOUSE.

Among the many causes of complaint against the Government which the Opposition have ingeniously invented, and, with considerable audacity, have laid against them, is that \$31,079.71 have been improperly expended for the construction and repair of the Sherbrooke Prison and Court-house, the district having nothing to its credit in the Building and Jury Fund. How far this statement is correct may be judged from the following recital of facts.

Since July, 1867, the District of St. Francis, of which Sherbrooke is the *chef lieu*, has paid into the Building and Jury Fund no less than \$33,500.00. Moreover, in addition to this, there has been received by the Province a surplus of \$20,250.00 from the district over and above the sum required to pay the officers of the Court. This sum could therefore be very properly transferred to the Building and Jury Fund. Moreover, after all, if the expenses entailed in the District of St. Francis have been great, the revenue which it has contributed has also been large. St. Francis is one of the old judicial districts of the Province, and the old prison was in ruins and unfitted to accommodate or retain prisoners. The construction of a new gaol was begun before Confederation, but it was only completed subsequent to 1867, and its cost is included in the amount above-mentioned. In other districts, the Government had expended considerable sums of money for the repair of court-houses and prisons, as well as in the District of St. Francis, the amounts being proportioned to absolute requirements, and as recommended by the Engineer of the Public Works Department and the Inspector of Prisons, being charged to the Building and Jury Fund of the respective districts, and voted by the Legislature from year to year.

Between 1867 and June 30th, 1885, there were expended in the construction and repair of court-houses and prisons in the respective districts the following amounts:—Arthabaska, \$8,972.99; Beauce, \$12,929.82; Bedford, \$18,040.34; Bonaventure, \$18,546.04; Gaspé, \$21,533.95; Iberville, \$15,606.50; Kamouraska, \$14,167.75; Montmagny, \$10,686.81; Montreal, \$245,161.39; Ot-

tawa, \$18,259.15; Quebec, \$296,653.37; Rimouski, \$9,154.94; St. Hyacinthe, \$11,419.10; Terrebonne, \$18,524.31; Trois-Rivières, \$21,027.00, and the District of St. Francis, \$31,079.71.

When we consider that, in 1867, the new prison at Sherbrooke was only partly built, and that the walls and the out-buildings had still to be put up, this amount of \$31,079.71 will not appear to be excessive, particularly in view of the position of the prison and the importance of the district.

REGARDING THIS MATTER FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE PUBLIC REQUIREMENTS, THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DISTRICT AND ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BUILDING AND JURY FUND, WILL ANY HONEST MAN PRETEND THAT THERE WAS ANYTHING WRONG IN CONNECTION WITH THIS MATTER?

SHERBROOKE AND THE MUNICIPAL LOAN FUND.

Mr. Mercier, leader of the Opposition, during the session, offered a motion of non-confidence in the Government on account of the settlement made with Sherbrooke as to the amount due by that city to the Municipal Loan Fund, and in his usual irresponsible manner made a totally incorrect representation of the facts. In substance, he made out that, by the settlement with Sherbrooke, the Province had sustained a loss of \$96,507.14, and that, because the Treasurer desired to ingratiate himself with his constituents.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE TRUE STATE OF THE CASE.

Sherbrooke borrowed \$80,000, less a discount of \$1,000 allowed by a preceding Treasurer upon debentures sold, thus reducing the loan to \$79,000. To this must be added, under the law of 1880, interest for twelve years, equal to \$47,400 making in all \$126,400. From this must be deducted \$77,259.41 repaid by Sherbrooke anterior to 1880, and in addition \$31,671.64 paid subsequently, or in all \$108,931.05, leaving an apparent balance of \$17,468.95 still due under the law of 1880, and not a balance of \$96,587.14 as represented by Mr. Mercier.

In the settlement of claims under the Municipal Loan Fund,

the Province being the creditor, the Government has made it a rule to take into consideration the amount repaid previous to 1880, and the manner in which the proceeds of the loan had been expended, to ascertain whether or not the Province at large, which was the creditor, had benefitted directly or indirectly thereby or if the money had been applied to purely local objects only.

Where the money had been expended on public objects from which the Province had benefitted, credit has been given for at least a portion of the loan, where the money had been applied to purely local objects, the Government has been more exacting, in every case, however, taking into consideration the debtors' means of paying as well as the amount of local taxation actually in force.

Lingwick owed \$13,051, under the law of 1880, for a road to Winslow, then in process of colonization, which had no other means of communication. The Government on this account, through Hon. Mr. Wurtele, accepted \$5,000 in settlement.

The city of Quebec owed \$59,065 expended upon wharves in the St. Charles River, and the Government, preceding the present one, accepted \$37,000 in settlement.

St. Johns, having sustained serious losses by fire, obtained a discount, on what it had received.

Sherbrooke had borrowed \$80,000 less a discount of \$1,000, and had paid up to 1st July, 1868 (twelve years from date of the loan), \$49,657.55 ; since that date, \$27,601.86 ; total, \$77,259.41. Before the passing of the Act of 1880, it had thus paid all the original amount, less \$1,741. It asked that \$47,400, equal to twelve years' interest, be deducted from the amount paid during the early years upon the amount of the loan, and that it be credited with the balance thus deducted with interest, which would almost completely wipe out the debt ; or rather that it be charged the twelve years of interest and that it be credited with interest upon its payments since the date of those payments which, with those payments would extinguish the entire debt, considering that some of those payments were made twenty-five years ago.

In 1837-38 the Government built a bridge over the River St. Francis which was on the highway from the Townships to Quebec,

then the principal cattle market in the Province, this being the only bridge between the St. Lawrence and the principal point on the River St. Francis. The bridge was carried away by a flood in 1864 and 1865. Application having been made to the Sandfield Macdonald-Dorion Administration for its reconstruction; the Government replied that it had no more Municipal Loan Fund debentures to advance for that purpose. However, if the municipal authorities were prepared to rebuild the bridge, the Government were disposed to deduct from the amount due by the town, on account of the Municipal Loan Fund, the cost of that bridge. An idea will be formed of the importance of that one bridge, when it is stated that there are now eight or nine bridges over the St. Francis, and the municipal authorities rebuilt the bridge at a cost of about \$17,000. It has therefore been thought just and reasonable to credit the city with a part of that amount in reduction of the Provincial claim against Sherbrooke.

The taxation at Sherbrooke is already very high (about 2 per cent. on the full value of the town property) higher, perhaps, than in any other part of the Province.

Having taken all these matters into serious consideration the Government considered it to be only just to accept in settlement of the debt of Sherbrooke the sum of \$31,671.84, instead of \$50,740.59, or rather of \$49,740.59, according to the Act of 1880. A vote of the Legislative Assembly of 39 to 15 showed that the action of the Government was sustained after a full explanation of all the facts of the case. It was shown in evidence that the pretensions of Mr. Mercier and of his Opposition friends were comple'ely false and without foundation, being actuated by the sole object of **DECEIVING THE PEOPLE.**

As for the towns of St. Johns and Levis, both represented by adversaries of the Government, they were settled with without difficulty, after an understanding with the representatives of the localities and an enquiry into the special circumstances, by allowing them certain discounts; and these gentlemen declared themselves satisfied with the settlement made with their constituents.

INSPECTION OF COLONIZATION WORKS.

Elsewhere, reference will have been found to the illiberal policy of the Liberal administration of Mr. Joly, in connection with colonization, that gentleman having reduced the amount expended for this object—so important in a gradually developing country like our own—to the insignificant sum of \$38,000, while the Government of the Hon. Mr. Ross augmented it to \$175,000. Last session the Liberals endeavored to pass a vote of censure upon the Government because it had employed an Inspector of Colonization Works. Did they desire to have these undertakings carried out at haphazard, and in such a manner as might best suit the pecuniary interests of the contractors, as in notable instances had been the case with several undertakings while the Liberals were in power? Apparently they were willing to allow colonization roads to build themselves, or be built in any direction and in such a manner as might suit the wishes of a few locally interested parties, thereby involving the fruitless expenditure of thousands of dollars that might have been prevented by an officer receiving a few hundred dollars salary, whose business was to visit the locality and satisfy himself as to all matters in connection with such works. This service could not be performed by the officers of the Department at the seat of government, and, moreover, would be likely to involve expenses much more heavy than the salary of an inspector. In fact,

THE POLICY INDICATED BY THE OPPOSITION IN THIS PARTICULAR
CAN ONLY BE DESCRIBED AS OF A PENNY-WISE
AND POUND-FOOLISH CHARACTER,

since it could not fail to be attended with extravagant expenditures and the obtainment of utterly useless or at least imperfectly constructed works.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS.

A very remarkable position has been assumed by the Opposition with respect to the law introduced by the Government compelling municipalities to pay half the cost of the maintenance in

the Asylum of lunatics from their localities, when they themselves had no means of doing so, and had no relatives bound to support them, or who were too poor to do so. It may be premised that the primary object of this law was not so much to saddle the municipalities with the cost of their lunatics, as to prevent abuses which, occurring within their limits, such municipalities were the best able to check and prevent. For instance, it is notorious that, before the adoption of this law, it was the custom of well to do—even of rich—families to rid themselves of the trouble and expense of such of their relatives as were unfortunately either lunatics or idiots, by procuring their admission to the lunatic asylums at the public cost. Now this caused abuses of an exceedingly grave character, as it filled the institutions with harmless idiots, who, being no cause of trouble to others than their family, should have been cared for by them rather than by the public. The common instincts of humanity should have been sufficient for their tender treatment at home; but so long as the public could be made to support them, the chief desire was to be relieved of expense and annoyance. This was not only a manifest injustice to the body of taxpayers, but constituted an abuse of the most serious character, against whose perpetration, the Administration was comparatively powerless until the law to which the Opposition object was brought into operation. Under it, the municipality in which the unfortunate patient resides, is made a party to the case and naturally its authorities and resident taxpayers satisfy themselves as to the facts of the case before they consent to be saddled with the maintenance of the patient. In the first place they determine whether or not it is necessary to remove the person to the Asylum, and secondly, they, as in the best position to know, decide for themselves whether the relatives are in a position to bear the cost of his mainenance, or if it is a case the pecuniary responsibility of which it is for them to assume. The provisions of this law are based alike on the principles of humanity and justice, and strange, indeed, is it that the Liberals should take the position which they do with respect to it. Is it just, it may be asked, that a burden which should be borne by the family, when they are in a position to assume it, should be thrown upon the public, and are not the local au-

thorities, from their knowledge of the facts and the surroundings, the best qualified to decide this; the more so when the fact of a portion of the expense having to be borne by them is likely to render them the more vigilant and the less disposed to be actuated in their decision by considerations of fear or of favour.

In connection with this measure, to which, during last session, the Liberals took such strong exception, it is worth while to comment upon the inconsistency that has marked their course. In 1880 they called for a vote upon it. In 1883 and 1884, when brought up for amendment, it was allowed to pass "on division;" while in 1885, in order to make a record, they took a vote upon the third reading, wishing to strike out the clauses imposing upon municipalities the duty of contributing one-half the cost of the maintenance of lunatics.

Their course in this connection can only be explained by the desire—not to vindicate a principle, but to catch votes at the coming elections, since there cannot be a question that **THE OBJECT OF THE MEASURE WAS TO DEAL WITH THE QUESTION EFFECTIVELY AND IN A SPIRIT OF EQUITY AND JUSTICE.**

THE DANSEREAU MATTER.

It will be readily apparent to those who have paid any attention to the subject that the Dansereau matter is a question for which the Government of Mr. Mousseau, not that of Mr. Ross was responsible, that Administration having commissioned Mr. Dansereau to purchase books for the Parliamentary Library, giving him a credit of \$15,000 for the purpose. The Ross Government, so soon as it came into office, demanded from Mr. Dansereau a statement of accounts, which, having been received, *experts* were appointed to compare the books with the invoices. They reported that, on the whole, the prices charged for the books were reasonable. Latterly, however, charges have been made of double invoices, but even if this be the case, the present Government cannot be blamed, since it has always held Mr. Dansereau to a strict account of his stewardship, and will compel him to acquit himself of his entire obligations to the full extent which law and justice demand. It may be surmised that, con-

sidering the position he has taken in the matter and the feeling he entertains towards Mr. Dansoreau, IF MR. MERCIER HAD INFORMATION OF ANY CRIMINAL IRREGULARITY, SUCH AS HAS BEEN BROADLY HINTED AT, HE SURELY WOULD NOT HAVE HESITATED TO PLACE IN THE HANDS OF THE AUTHORITIES SUCH INFORMATION AS WOULD HAVE LED TO THE VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE PUBLIC.

MR. CHARLEBOIS' CLAIMS.

Considerable clamour having been raised in connection with the contract with Mr. Charlebois for the construction of the Parliamentary Buildings at Quebec, and Mr. Mercier having declared in his place in the House that the late Mr. Mousseau had in effect sold the contract, a long and exhaustive inquiry was entered upon by Commission appointed by the Legislative Assembly, from which it resulted that there was no proof of Mr. Mercier's statements. The testimony, indeed, went to show that, on the contrary, everything possible had been done in the interest of the public. Moreover, the Commission fully inquired into the allegations made by the leader of the Opposition in regard to the arrangements made with the contractor for furnishing and preparing temporary sessional accommodation in the then uncompleted building, and emphatically declared that neither Mr. Mousseau nor the Ross Government had unduly favoured the contractor.

NEITHER OF THESE REPORTS, WHEN SUBMITTED TO THE HOUSE, WERE ATTACKED BY MR. MERCIER, WHO APPEARED TO PREFER APPEALING TO THE PEOPLE, WHO WERE NOT POSTED AS TO THE FACTS, AND UPON WHOM HE HAS SOUGHT TO IMPOSE BY THE AID OF HIS VOLUBILITY AND EXTREME ASSERTIVENESS.

Upon a variety of minor matters the Opposition has exhausted its energies and ingenuity in the attempt to trump up charges, but these, like those which have been enumerated, have fallen with the weight of their own inconsequence and the lack of the proofs by which they should—to be successful—have been supported. For want, therefore, of purely provincial issues upon which to successfully attack the Administration, the Provincial Opposition—who have been accustomed to pose as defenders of Provincial autonomy—have managed to construct for themselves

a platform having as its basis and foundation "the Regina scaffold."

It should always be borne in mind that upon a motion to go into "Committee of Supply," any amendment proposed must be voted upon "straight," that is, that no sub-amendment can be proposed, showing the real facts connected with the motion in amendment before the House, and by this rule of the House, all kinds of false statements appear in the journals, which could not be exposed, as could and would have been done if the amendments proposed had been made at any other time than when a motion to go into supply was made. Mr. Mercier therefore took the opportunity of the rule of House being as it is, to prevent the true state of affairs from being laid before the House and appearing in the journals.

THE RIEL AFFAIR.

As the Premier stated in his recent speech at Ste. Therèse, nobody knew better than Mr. Mercier and his friends that the Local Government had nothing whatever to do with pronouncing on the execution of Riel. No doubt many people regretted the circumstances which led up to the execution of Riel, but it was incumbent upon the Government not to interfere in Federal politics. Indeed, if the Province presumes to attempt to dictate to the Federal authority in matters that are purely of Dominion concern, it is most effectually driving in an entrance wedge that may not, it is true, split up the Confederation, but will MOST ASSUREDLY OPEN THE WAY FOR INVASIONS UPON PROVINCIAL RIGHTS AND ATTRIBUTES; for the maintenance of which Mr. Mercier and his friends have been most blatant, if not most consistent in their demands.

The attitude of the Liberals and so-called Nationalists has been almost inexplicable, unless it is to be interpreted by the fact that their lust of office and their bitter hatred of the Conservative party have utterly blinded them to every consideration by which honest and loyal men should be governed. Even Mr. Laurier, a former Minister of the Crown, and still upon the list of Her Majesty's Privy Council, did not hesitate, in addressing a mass meeting on the Champ de Mars, Montreal, to make the declara-

tion that if he had been living on the shores of the Saskatchewan, he would have been ready to shoulder his musket against the Government of Her Majesty.

This revolutionary sentiment the member for Quebec East repeated and re-affirmed on the floor of the House of Commons, while, a few weeks since, at a meeting at Longueuil, he even amplified and expressed those ideas in more forcible terms. "RULE OR RUIN!" would seem to be the motto of the malcontents whose sanguinary deliverances have not been repudiated by the mass of the Liberal party. It is true the rank and file have not yet had an opportunity, since the time of the unfortunate occurrences that we all so much deplore, of practically signifying the sentiments which they entertain; nevertheless, the course of the opponents of the Governments at Ottawa and Quebec, in making the appeals which they have done, upon issues that were not within the Provincial purview, has been most flagitious and, indeed, in the highest degree deplorable.

It is to be observed here that hardly had the Champ de Mars deliverances of Hon. Mr. Laurier appeared in cold type than the English Liberal party in the Province of Quebec, rose in solemn protest, and the Reformers of Ontario joined in the repudiation of a declaration bordering on treason, in the mouth of a Privy Councillor to whom all had been accustomed to look with feelings of the deepest respect. In his Mono Mills' speech, Hon. Mr. White thus fitly described the situation of affairs in this Province. "This is happily not a religious question. The Roman Catholic Episcopate have objected to and have denounced the agitation. Some of them have even gone so far as to prevent high masses being said for the repose of the soul of Louis Riel, because they saw in it an attempt to make political capital out of the sacred ordinances of the church." For the reason that this is a purely Federal concern it is improper to discuss the rights and the wrongs of the trial and execution. The House of Commons, the grand inquest of the nation, was appealed to to condemn the Government for its action in the matter; but, after a close consideration of the facts, it rejected, by an immense majority, the resolutions of censure that were presented.

Ever since the execution the subject has been kept before the

electorate by men who have not scrupled to appeal to passion and prejudice, and now, because, in the Provincial Legislature, Hon. Mr. Taillon, speaking for the Government, declared that neither its members nor the members of the Legislature had any right to intervene, a propaganda has been carried on with the object of defeating the administration—not for any harm that it had done, but because it had refused to countenance an agitation with which it had no concern. Moreover, as has been shown, such interference would have been most prejudicial to the interests of the Province, and upon that account the people are confidently appealed to to give the *quietus* to this most unconstitutional crusade, and to this most unrighteous persecution of an Administration against which the worst that can be said is, not that it has not fulfilled its every pledge, but that it has refused to co-operate with those whose sole ambition is, under false pretences, to defeat the Administration at Ottawa, which otherwise appears to be firmly rooted in the confidence and affections of the majority of the people of the Dominion.

Between the Riel cry, which has been raised by the Rouges as a desperate effort to get into power, and between a programme of extended railways, increased immigration and colonization, and a policy promoting the best interests of the Province, the people are asked to choose. It has been the Conservative party which has built up the Dominion to the position it occupies to-day, and it has been the Conservative party under which the Province of Quebec has progressed in commercial and agricultural prosperity.

THE CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT, LED BY HON. MR. ROSS, CAME INTO POWER PLEDGED TO CARRY OUT A POLICY OF ECONOMY AND RETRENCHMENT, AND BOUND TO A VINDICATION OF THE CLAIMS OF THE PROVINCE AS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT AT OTTAWA. IT FURTHER ENGAGED TO WORK UNREMITTINGLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE PROVINCE. THAT IT HAS KEPT ITS WORD IN EACH AND EVERY PARTICULAR ITS RECORD HAS AMPLY SHOWN, AND HENCE IT APPEALS WITH THE FULLEST CONFIDENCE TO THE PEOPLE FOR THE RENEWAL OF THAT SUPPORT WHICH IN THE PAST HAS BEEN SO GENEROUSLY GIVEN IT.